

DRAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 9 May 2023 in the Village Hall at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr R Binks - Chairman
Cllr T Coupe
Cllr B Davies
Cllr J Garnett
Cllr R Neale
Cllr S Petty
Cllr A Turner
Mrs J Markham – Clerk

1. Election of Chairman

It was resolved (proposed by Cllr Neale; seconded by Cllr Turner):
“That Councillor Binks be and she is hereby elected as Chairman of the Council with immediate effect to serve until the date of the next annual meeting.”

The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. Apologies for Absence

None

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

It was resolved (proposed by Cllr Neale; seconded by the Chairman):
“That Councillor Coupe be and he is hereby elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council with immediate effect to serve until the date of the next annual meeting.”

4. Register of Interests

Councillors present at the meeting confirmed their interests, as recorded in the Register of Interests held and maintained by the Council’s principal authority.

5. Disclosure of Interests

Members were invited to disclose any interests (including any not already registered in the Register of Interests) relevant to the business of the meeting, and, in respect of a disclosable pecuniary interest (to be

registered or not), to request dispensation pursuant to the Council's Code of Conduct to participate in the business under discussion and vote on the matter.

Relevant Interests disclosed: None

Additional Interests disclosed: None.

6. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 3 April 2023

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 April 2023 were taken as read, and the Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

7. Matters arising

The Clerk's report, for information, on matters arising from the meeting held on 3 April was received. It was noted that the new draft Parish Charter had been discussed at a joint working group meeting, held earlier in the day, in the light of comments raised during recent consultations with the parish sector. The draft would now be revised with final amendments and then go forward to NYC Executive in the summer. It was reported that the Council's response to the Government consultation on permitted development rights had been submitted; the response prepared by NALC had also been circulated to members for information. The Council's response to NYC's consultation on their draft Climate Change Strategy had been submitted.

8. Annual Parish Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24 April 2023 were confirmed. There were no matters referred from electors for discussion by the Council other than those included as items of business on the agenda for the current Council meeting.

9. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's Report on ongoing items of business was discussed.

The following matters were noted as follows:

- (i) History Project - Cllr Neale reported that work was due to continue over the summer.
- (ii) Coronation Celebrations – Cllr Turner reported that the event in the village hall had been hugely successful, with funds of some £320 being raised from bar sales. The Council's donation of £100 had been used to buy an item of Coronation memorabilia, a bookmark, for each child attending the event.

10.Policies and Procedures of the Council

The Council's existing policies and procedural documents, including the Risk Policy and associated risk assessments, as published on the website, were reviewed and confirmed.

The Clerk noted that an updated version of the Code of Conduct, to be revised to reflect the provisions of the principal authority's document, was to be presented to a future meeting, following receipt of advice from sector body YLCA.

11.Delegation to Committees and Other Local Authorities

Members were reminded that no authority was currently delegated to committees or other local authorities.

The delegation arrangements of the Council were confirmed.

12.Delegation to Clerk

It was noted that the authority currently delegated to the Clerk, as set out in the Scheme of Delegation dated 7 June 2021 and published on the Council's website, continued to comply with procedures for delegated authority as detailed in Financial Regulations (as updated 2022).

It was RESOLVED:

“THAT the Scheme of Delegation dated 7 June 2021 remain in force until such time as the Council should determine otherwise.”

13.Scheme of Delegation

It was RESOLVED:

“THAT decisions taken by the Clerk since the date of the last meeting under the Scheme of Delegation dated 7 June 2021, as reported to Council and published on the Council's website, be ratified.”

14.Planning

The Clerk's report on ongoing planning business was presented and noted.

The following matter was considered:

- Former Quarry (2022/24036/FUL) – application for variation of condition – details to be checked outside the meeting and comments, if any, made by the Clerk on behalf of the Council.

The Clerk noted that development activity on a site near Draughton Bottom was being queried with planning officers; also, clearance of building supplies from the railway site, following refusal of planning consent for use of the site for storage, would be followed up again.

15. Climate Change Projects

Cllr Neale updated members on progress being made on the village's climate change projects, supported by the Parish Council.

Work to insulate St Augustine's roof, as a first step in the church's project, was due to start in the Autumn and a related project was possibly to be considered by the Village Hall Trustees, following receipt of a consultants' report into options to improve the building's energy usage.

Progress continued to be made in developing the community project Draughton Action to Zero. It had been established that the local grid had sufficient capacity for connections to be installed for both a wind turbine and a small solar array, as potentially to be required by the two "customers" for a supply of locally-generated renewable energy. Discussions with both of these potential customers continued. Work also continued to liaise with regional and national networks to publicise local initiatives and to encourage more widespread local action.

It was noted that a meeting of the DAZ Working Group had been provisionally arranged to be held on 3 July to review the project.

It was accordingly and unanimously RESOLVED:

- (1) "THAT the village climate project, Draughton Action to Zero, continue to be formally supported and that work to progress it continue, as planned, and as reported to the Council from time to time, with oversight provided by a working group of the Council."
- (2) "THAT the working group of the Council, known as the DAZ working group, chaired by Cllr Neale, be re-appointed to progress the development of climate-change initiatives in the local community, that councillors Neale, Davies and Garnett be re-appointed to serve on it alongside interested local residents drawn from the community from time to time, and that current Terms of Reference for the DAZ working group be confirmed."

16. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

The Clerk reported that the Internal Auditor had conducted his annual audit of the Council's financial records and procedures. It was noted that, as set out in the audit report, the records and systems of internal control were adequate and effective, and that accounting information shown in the Annual Return had been correctly stated. Separately, the Internal Auditor had provided an additional note for councillors, confirming that matters had been corrected by the Clerk as regards an arithmetical error noted on the annual VAT reclaim.

The Auditor's Report, the Statement of Receipts and Payments 2022/23 and the Bank Reconciliation to 31 March 2023 were received and noted.

Taking the assurances of the Internal Auditor into account, it was then RESOLVED:

- (1) "THAT the Annual Governance Statement in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 be approved for signature by the Chairman and Clerk."
- (2) "THAT the Accounting Statements 2022/23, as signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, be approved for signature by the Chairman."
- (3) "THAT the Clerk be authorised to set the period for the exercise of public rights, and to publish information on the website, as required under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities."

17. External Audit 2022/2023

The Clerk noted that, pursuant to s.9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, since neither gross income nor gross expenditure for the year of account ending 31 March 2023 exceeded £25000, the Council was eligible to certify itself as exempt from limited assurance review by external auditors. It was accordingly RESOLVED:

"THAT a Certificate of Exemption be completed, notifying the external auditor that during the financial year 2022/23 the higher of the authority's gross income for the year or gross annual expenditure for the year did not exceed £25,000."

18. Register of Assets

The updated register of the Council's asset holdings, as circulated to Members, was noted.

19. Insurances 2023/24

Renewal of the Council's insurances for 2023/24 with Zurich for a premium of £206.09 (£206.09 in 2022/23) was approved.

20. Consultations, Correspondence and Members' Discussion Forum

Newsletters and emails circulated for information were noted, including a report from the Clerk on a recent meeting held by YLCA JEB. The Clerk was re-appointed as the Council's representative to attend YLCA Branch and JEB meetings. A copy of YLCA's training programme had been circulated to councillors.

Consultation material issued by the Government to take forward potential new legislation on short-term holiday lets was discussed. A draft response to the consultation questions, taking account of comments raised by local electors at the Annual Parish Meeting, was considered and approved. The Clerk was authorised to submit the response to the online consultation.

21. Meeting Schedule 2023-24

The proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2023/24 was received and noted and the current cycle of meetings was confirmed.

22. Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in the Village Hall in July 2023 on a date to be confirmed by the Clerk.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

Chairman